

REMARKS

In the April 28, 2004 Office communication, a restriction requirement is made between Group I, claims 1-4, drawn to a flat cable assembly, Group II, claims 5-9, drawn to a rotary connector (clockspring), and Group III, claims 10-13, drawn to a method of securing a flat cable to a circuit board. Applicants elect Group I, claims 1-4, with traverse.

By the present amendment, new dependent claims 14-16 are added, leaving claims 1-16 pending in this application with claims 1, 5, 8 and 10 being independent.

The inventions of Groups I and II are allegedly distinct as combination and subcombination because the combination does not require the particulars of the subcombination since it can use any conductive wires other than a flat cable. However, both claimed inventions of Groups I and II recite a flat cable. For example, independent claim 1 of Group I and independent claim 5 of Group II both recite, among other elements, a flat cable having a plurality of round conductors. Therefore, contrary to the Office communication, both inventions of Groups I and II specifically recite a flat cable.

Additionally, dependent claim 4 of Group I recites that the flat cable is used in a clockspring, thereby linking Group I to the clockspring as claimed in Group II. As such, the same search is required for both groups adding no additional burden to examine both groups. Therefore, there is no reason for insisting on the restriction requirement, as required by MPEP §806.05(c).

Also, the Office communication indicates that the inventions of Groups I, II and III are allegedly distinct as process of making and product made. Specifically, the Office communication asserts that the flat cable can be secured to a circuit board by a different method other than soldering. However, MPEP §806.05(f) requires that the different method be a materially different method. The Office communication fails to provide any examples of

a method that is materially different than soldering that can be used to make the flat cable of the claimed invention.

New Claims 14-16

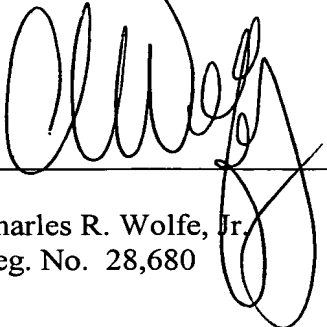
New claims 14-16 depend from claim 1 and therefore are included with elected Group I. Moreover, these claims link the claimed inventions of Groups I and II. New claim 14 recites that a housing holds the flat cable therein, as recited in claim 5 of Group II. The remaining limitations of independent claim 5 are present in claim 1. New claim 15 recites that the housing is a clockspring housing and that the circuit board is supported by said clockspring housing, similar to the recitations in independent claim 8 of Group II. The remaining limitations of claim 8 are present in claim 1. Finally, new claim 16 recites that the solder pads include a layer of solder paste for soldering to the conductors of the flat cable, as recited in claim 9 of Group II. Given these linking claims, the same search is required for both groups adding no additional burden to examine both groups. Therefore, there is no reason for insisting on the restriction requirement, as required by MPEP §806.05(c).

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In view of the foregoing, the restriction requirement is believed improper and should be withdrawn. Prompt and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

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BLANK ROME LLP
Watergate
600 New Hampshire Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20037
Telephone: (202) 772-5800

Respectfully submitted,

By: _____
Charles R. Wolfe, Jr.
Reg. No. 28,680